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ABSTRACT

The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) Summit that focused on the education and academic achievement of African American students was unique because the school district and the African American community came together as partners to seek ways to improve the educational status of African American students. This report tells the story of the efforts of business leaders, community activists, educators, students, parents, and politicians who came together in the summer and fall of 1997 to develop a plan to increase the reading and mathematics skills of African American students in the SFUSD. The report begins with a challenge from the SFUSD superintendent, which is followed by highlights of counseling issues affecting African American students in public schools. The Systemic Approach to Counseling emerged as a powerful tool for helping African American youth deal with their social situations. In addition, a discussion of test scores enlightened conference attendees about the various standardized tests used by schools and colleges to determine admission. A panel discussion on how the religious and business community can support students in the SFUSD came next. This panel and subsequent discussions brought out the "Each one, reach one" way for the city's churches to become involved in the education success of students in their communities. Business leaders spoke about how to apply for jobs and discussed ways for African American students to gain internships and other school work experiences. The report also explains how the new school system will provide learning centers for all SFUSD African American students from kindergarten through grade 12, and it records ways in which parents and churches will become involved with the education of these students. The report explains the form and structure that the district's new initiatives will take. One appendix contains Robert L. Green's position paper on African American reading and mathematics achievement and the other two list program participants and authors. (Contains 39 references.) (SLD)

ED 423 336

Ownership, Responsibility, and Accountability for Student Achievement. The African American Community Education Partnership Summit. San Francisco Unified School District

Report Prepared by:
Robert Green

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Ownership, Responsibility and Accountability for Student Achievement

The African American Community Education Partnership Summit
San Francisco Unified School District

Convened by

WALDEMAR ROJAS
Superintendent of Schools

KEITH JACKSON
President, Board of Education

Report prepared by

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Ownership, Responsibility and Accountability for Student Achievement

Report of the
African American Community Education Partnership Summit

San Francisco Unified School District

CONVENERS
Waldemar Rojas, Superintendent of Schools
Keith Jackson, President, Board of Education

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Robert L. Green, Ph.D.
Summit Education Consultant

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the San Francisco Unified School District Summit focusing on the education and academic achievement of African American students cannot be overemphasized. The summit was unique in terms of the school district and the African American community coming together as partners to seek ways to improve the educational status of African American students.

But this is not the first time the African American community in San Francisco has struggled for educational equality for its children. About 125 years ago – 24 years before *Plessy v. Ferguson* sanctioned "separate but equal" facilities -- African American parents in San Francisco were struggling for the right to have their children properly educated by trying to bring an end to segregated schools in San Francisco. It was a time when separate schools were permitted but not required and the San Francisco School Board chose to keep white students and black students segregated. When African American residents of San Francisco attempted to register their children in the "white" schools, their efforts were rebuffed. They were told they had to enroll their children in one or the other of two "colored" schools. Unfortunately, in *Ward v. Flood*, 48 Cal. 42 (1874), the California Supreme Court upheld the right of Principal Flood to deny blacks entry to the "white" school as long as "colored" schools were available.

A National Problem

It should also be pointed out that this summit and its focus are important not only for African American youngsters attending San Francisco public schools but for African American youngsters throughout the United States and for society at large. The problems facing San Francisco educators are not unique to this city. They are universal problems in urban centers from the West Coast to the East Coast and from the North to the South. Throughout the country, African American youngsters as a group are lagging behind their white, Asian, and other ethnic counterparts in reading, math, and science proficiency, in high school graduation rates, in attendance at

four-year colleges and universities, in wage-earning capacity, in employment opportunities, and in good health.

For well over a decade, about a third of the students enrolled in central city public schools in the United States have been black. In 1993, 10 percent of the students in metropolitan-area public schools outside of central cities also were black, up from 6 percent in 1970, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (1997). As urban dwellers, many African Americans live in substandard housing, receive sub-par city services, and have a disproportionate number languishing in jails and prisons. African Americans, in fact, are often poorer and sicker than other ethnic groups in urban America. The U.S. Department of Education recognized that "low achievement, high dropout rates, and poor educational performance are highly correlated with poverty."

Poor Health Linked to Poverty

There is also a strong link between poverty and health as demonstrated in a 29-year study by public health researchers at the University of Michigan. They concluded that "high levels of income inequality in the United States and reduced access to medical care for the poor are likely to have serious short- and long-term public health consequences." The study, which tracked more than 1,000 people in Alameda County, Calif., provided "the best scientific evidence to date that being in economic hardship causes poor health outcomes" ("Poverty," 1997).

An earlier study, published in the *American Journal of Public Health* (1996), examined data from the National Health Interview Surveys on the effects of poverty, race, and family structure on U.S. children's health. Those researchers concluded that children in families headed by single mothers, African American children, and those living below 150 percent of the poverty index were much more likely to be in poor or fair health than children in two-parent families, white children, or those in more affluent families.

One health problem that has been steadily increasing is asthma, which is the number one contributor to school absenteeism. Although the asthma mortality rate for African American males was nearly five times higher than the rate among white males and females in 1988,

poverty rather than race seems to be the most important variable. Inner city neighborhoods with high rates of poverty tend to have high rates of asthma (Hanson, 1997). In one San Francisco elementary school, more than a fifth of the 380 children enrolled have medically certified asthma conditions.

Contributing to poor health is the unavailability of black physicians, who tend to treat more black patients than do white physicians. In 1985 there were 26,000 black physicians but by 1990 there were only 16,000. In fact, after the Supreme Court refused to hear the ACLU appeal on Proposition 209, the ACLU of Southern California noted in a news release that there had been a 17 percent decline in minority applications to California medical schools ("Statement of ACLU," 1997).

Importance of Education

This, of course, returns us to the critical importance of education in the African American community. Due to group variation in achievement, some African American students are competitive with other racial and ethnic groups, and a few outperform their counterparts. Although some do well, a disproportionate number do not do well; their performance as a whole is often below that of their peers. For example, according to a report of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the average scores of black students at ages 9, 13, and 17 in reading, mathematics, and science ranged from 25 to 49 points below the scores of their white counterparts. The gap was particularly extreme in science proficiency.

Perhaps even more revealing about the level at which black students as a group are underachieving are the average SAT scores of college-bound seniors. Although black students' math and verbal scores on the SAT improved from 1976 to 1995, a huge gap remains between black and white students' scores. The combined math and verbal SAT scores in 1995 were 946 for white students and 744 for black students.

Higher Education Implications

This poor performance can lead to dire consequences, particularly when examined against a backdrop of legislation such as

Proposition 209 in California. Although African Americans' representation in higher education has increased during the past decade, it is still significantly below the percentage they represent in the general population. The increased numbers of African Americans in higher education can be attributed to the large increase in the number of African American women attending colleges and universities. According to the *African American Education Data Book, Volume 1: Higher and Adult Education* (1997) twice as many African American women as men earn bachelor's and master's degrees each year.

A report from the National Center for Education Statistics shows that the number of African American males earning bachelor's degrees hit a high point in 1977 of 25,147. Each year since then, fewer degrees have been awarded to African American males. The *Data Book* also noted that African American students at both two-year and four-year schools have lower family incomes than their peers and over half of those enrolled in bachelor's degree programs are in the lowest quartile of American socioeconomic status. "Because of the disparity between African Americans and whites in the percentage who receive college degrees and in the highest degree field," the *Data Book* said, "African Americans are less likely to fill their share of new work force positions that require college degrees."

The Number One Priority

It is clear that African American students will have to work harder than ever before. Education must become the Number One priority in the African American community because so much hinges on educational attainment, particularly the ability to improve one's socioeconomic status. Other statistics from NCES show that 25-34-year-old adults who had not completed high school earned substantially less than those who had a high school diploma. Those who had earned at least a bachelor's degree earned substantially more than those who had completed only high school.

High school dropouts were more than twice as likely to receive public assistance than high school graduates who did not go on to college. Among African Americans, 29.9 percent of those who had completed only 9-11 years of school received public assistance in

1994; 12.9 percent of those who had completed high school received public assistance. Educational attainment is also related to civic responsibility. For example, college graduates, 25-44 years of age, were 86 percent more likely to vote than were high school graduates. High school dropouts were 58 percent less likely to vote than were high school graduates. The latter data indicate conclusively that African American families, churches, civic groups, community-based organizations, and sororities and fraternities must make education the Number One priority.

There is also a dynamic interaction between education and social class. Although middle class African Americans are acquiring education at a rapid and good rate, those who are poor, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised are dropping out of school . As a result, they suffer consequences such as unemployment, inadequate or no health care, conflict with the law, and eventually incarceration. Slightly more than half of the 1.1 million people in state and federal prisons are African Americans, and the majority are male. As Green (1991, October) observed, "If the black male is not in high school, he will not be on the college campus, but will surely be unemployed or, much worse, involved in crime" (p. 6). Not only are African American boys and men being locked up, but the incarceration of African American women is also on the rise. This raises the question, "who is taking care of the children?" This has acute implications for African American family life.

Racism and Employment

The failure of the educational system is significantly related to the breach between African Americans and whites and other racial and ethnic groups. But it is a breach that can be overcome. Racism is yet a barrier to African American progress. As Cornel West (1993) has noted, race matters. But race is no longer the only issue. There are other barriers to our achievement.

For example, a recent study of unemployment in the African American community in the San Francisco Bay Area employment centers concluded that race and educational attainment were the most important variables in explaining differences in unemployment. Researchers at the University of California-Berkeley found that

African American neighborhoods had significantly higher unemployment rates than predominantly non-black neighborhoods. Race accounted for 58 percent of the difference in unemployment rates and educational attainment accounted for 33 percent of the difference ("New Evidence," 1997).

We cannot always deal with racism because racism is something that others inflict on us, but we need to continue to resist it. *Inequality By Design* (1996) cites categorical data indicating that public policy choices (by design) negatively contribute to the status of African Americans. There are, however, issues and factors that we can modify and control in the African American community. We can keep our youngsters out of trouble. We can teach them a good set of health values, a respect for human life, and a respect for education and excelling in school. We can make sure that our youngsters attend school, attend their classes, and excel academically.

Class Attendance Linked to Achievement

The relationship between school attendance and achievement has been well documented. For example, in a SFUSD report of student academic performance it was found that the grade point averages for students attending their classes was higher than for those who did not attend. Specifically, African American students in middle school had a mean grade point average of 2.12. For those who attended 91-100 percent of their classes, however, that average was 2.49. Similarly, the mean grade point average for high school African American students was 1.81, but for those who attended 91-100 percent of their classes it was 2.46.

The summit title, "Ownership, Responsibility and Accountability for Achievement," means that the African American community has to look at what it can do to deal with its own condition in partnership with the SFUSD. This summit represents a major and determined effort of educators, parents, and community leaders to unite in the goal of improving the academic achievement of African American children. This academic achievement summit called by the community and the SFUSD should be seen as a critical phase of the ongoing, joint quest of the African American community and the San Francisco Unified School District to ensure that their children receive

the best education possible. The summit should also be seen as a concerted effort to consolidate and further the progress of African American students. It also acknowledges the struggle of communities and school systems throughout the nation to improve the educational status of African American students.

Repairing the Educational Breach

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation's National Task Force on African American Men and Boys observed that "African American boys are not being challenged and prepared with even the basic skills needed to compete successfully in the world of employment in an emerging global economy" (1996, pp. 97-98). Recognizing this as well, the San Francisco Education Partnership summit had one principal goal: to develop strategies and techniques to significantly increase the math and reading performance of African American children in San Francisco. A secondary goal was to strengthen parental, community, peer, and teacher support for the achievement of African American students to equal the national average within the next two years. Objectives to achieve this goal include:

- Increasing overall academic achievement;
- Reducing the placement of African American students in special education classes;
- Reducing suspensions and expulsions;
- Reducing dropout rates for African American students;
- Increasing the graduation rate and college attendance of African American students; and
- Increasing the rate of class attendance.

Major workshops were led by nationally and locally recognized experts in these areas. These experts shared and explained strategies that have proved effective in raising the educational performance of African American students. They also provided assistance to summit participants in developing strategies specifically designed to achieve the goals of the summit. Therefore, the summit focused on:

- Improving Reading Achievement

- Improving Math Achievement
- Increasing Student Retention, Classroom Participation and Strategies for Success
- Increasing Parent, Family and Community Involvement and Support
- Increasing Self Esteem and Student Achievement

The conference had a very strong central focus on the educational agenda, which centered around reading and mathematics. Why reading and math? Reading is essential in the educational process. It is the gateway to the liberal arts and to seeking knowledge, to learning about the past, to understanding the present, to being able to see what others are writing about the future. As the NCES (1997) also pointed out, "poor readers may also find it difficult to participate effectively in an economy requiring increasingly sophisticated job skills."

Math is the gateway to the sciences. You cannot understand chemistry, physics, or logic, unless you have a background in mathematics. Not only is knowledge of mathematics critical for success in science but it is also critical for computers and related fields. "In an increasingly technological world, the mathematics skills of the Nation's workers may be a crucial component of economic competitiveness," the NCES (1997) noted.

Reading and mathematics is critical to performance on standardized tests such as the ACT and the SAT. At an even more basic level, when youngsters cannot read and cannot do math their self esteem suffers. This often leads to conflict, suspensions, and expulsions. Even college athletic coaches realize that when they have players who they want to keep on the team and keep eligible, they must focus on their players' reading and mathematics skills. That is central.

Leadership and Educational Change

What is particularly significant about this summit is that the San Francisco Unified School District has taken a proactive stance to facilitate the education of African American students jointly with the African American community.[10] It has taken the lead in

acknowledging that there is a problem and it is tackling that problem head-on. The African American community is truly at a crossroads. We must put on the brakes and stop the slide and the deterioration that we see in so many of our communities. Education is a potent force in reversing the negative slide we see in our communities. Persons who become highly educated are more likely to be in a position to change their status and the status of their community. They will be in a better position to refashion and reshape backward and negative public policy as it affects African American communities, and we must start moving in the right direction. We cannot allow a segment of the black community to continue to slip. If we continue to find a gap between middle-class African Americans and those who are at the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder, the overall community is going to suffer.

It is true that we are beginning to increase our numbers in the finest colleges and universities in America such as Princeton, Yale, Harvard, Hampton, Howard, Morehouse, Duke, Spelman, and Florida A&M. Organizations such as the Florida Endowment Fund, foundations, African American churches, and African American communities have made it possible for African American youngsters to attend the finest universities in America. But it is just as true that the numbers of African American males have significantly increased in county, state, and federal jails and prisons. African Americans are also going in record numbers to Jackson Prison in Michigan, to Lorton Prison in Virginia, to Rikers Island in New York, and to Parchman Prison in Mississippi. In some states, jail houses are being built faster than school houses. Although a majority of those incarcerated are African American males, data indicates that an increasing number of females are also being incarcerated. This valuable talent in the African American community cannot be lost.

To reverse this trend, though, our efforts must begin long before these youngsters become teenagers. This effort must begin at the preschool and early elementary level. Education is important. It can and must become a major anchor point for strength in the African American community so that African American children will be able to succeed in the global economy of the 21st Century.

This report tells the story of the strong efforts of business leaders, community activists, educators, students, parents, and politicians who came together in the Summer and Fall of 1997 to develop a plan to increase the reading and mathematics skills of African American students in the SFUSD. As a result of this unique, collaborative effort, the SFUSD and the San Francisco community have specific recommendations and policy implications that can be implemented immediately.

The blueprint that follows begins with a challenge from the SFUSD superintendent. It is followed by highlights of counseling issues affecting African American students in public schools. The Systemic Approach to Counseling emerged as a powerful tool for helping African American youth deal with their social situations. In addition, a discussion of test scores enlightened the conference attendees. Here, participants learned about the various standardized tests used by schools and colleges to determine admission.

A panel discussion on how the religious and business community can support the students in the SFUSD came next. Before the weekend was over, participants began to hear much about "Each one, reach one" as a way for the African American church to become involved in the education success of students in their communities. Business leaders delivered messages on how to apply for jobs and discussed ways for African American students to gain internships and other school to work experiences.

The report also explains how the new school system will provide learning centers for all SFUSD African American students from kindergarten to twelfth grade. It also records ways in which parents and churches will become involved with the education of these children.

Finally, this report reflects the main goals of the African American community education summit. It seeks to explain, for example, the form and structure that the new initiatives will take. Moreover, it seeks to provide detailed documentation of the activities, speeches, and workshops that took place from Nov. 13-17, 1997, in San Francisco, California.

CONFERENCE FORMAT

The African American Community Education Partnership Summit: Focusing on Reading and Mathematics Achievement came about because the parent community and the school district were concerned about the academic achievement levels of African American students in the San Francisco Unified School District. A series of community meetings was organized by the project consultants, Shirley Howard-Johnson and Dr. Robert L. Green. At these community meetings with the SUFSD superintendent, Dr. Waldemar Rojas, parents and other members of the community had the opportunity to express their concerns about the education of African American children in the district. Following these meetings, Dr. Green prepared a position paper that provided the focus for the Summit Partnership held on Nov. 14-15, 1997. This position paper is Appendix C of this report.

Four pre-conference workshops, held on Nov. 13, focused on problematic areas facing African American students and directly provided the backdrop for the larger conference. The problematic areas were determined by talking to principals, counselors, teachers, and through school visits. Especially key in arriving at these areas were dialogues held with parents and with students, who discussed what they saw as being critically related to their development in school.

Effective Counseling

One of the issues raised by African American students and parents was the concern about effective counseling. In addition to the normal problems faced by students such as peer relations and homework assignments, African American students also have to deal with the issue of race. Students have learned that race and racism can be set before them as a barrier to their progress in American life. But it is up to students to look for ways to overcome this barrier. Counselors who are sensitive to the issues related to diversity and who have successfully dealt with racism in their own lives should be selected to counsel students. The person selected to lead the workshop is a national authority on counseling African American students faced with problems related to race, social class, and other

teenage and pre-teenage issues. Dr. Thomas Gunnings of Michigan State University led the first workshop, which focused on *Effective Counseling for African American Students in Public Schools.*

Test Scores

Another issue of great concern was test scores. Proposition 209 has made minority students' performance on standardized tests critically important. Panelists were selected who knew about the composition of tests and who could also talk to students about the importance of reading and studying in order for them to expand their verbal background so they will do better on standardized tests. The workshop, on *Understanding Student Test Scores: What Every Parent Needs to Know,* was led by Hoover Liddell of SFUSD. It was designed to help parents understand the meaning of test scores and what test scores reflect. Do standardized tests measure students' current academic status, their potential, or do they measure both? Those are the issues that were dealt with in that workshop.

Community-Based Support

In order for youngsters to succeed in schools, they must also have community-based support. What can the religious and business communities do to support the education of African American youngsters? Because of the historic and strong link between the African American community and formal religious institutions, a partnership with churches was seen as crucial. The focus of the third workshop was the way to strengthen that link so that it lends itself to students' academic achievement. Dr. Rod Paige, superintendent of the Houston Public Schools gave the keynote address on *Tapping the Religious and Business Community to Support Youth Development and Academic Achievement.* Panelists included members of the San Francisco religious and business communities.

School to Work

Finally, business and government representatives focused on *Getting A Job: The Transition from School to Work.* In meetings with parents and students it was learned that many African American youngsters from poor backgrounds are working to buy necessities to meet the day-to-day needs that are met by the parents of middle class youngsters.

The two-day conference involved national and local speakers and included representatives from all the stakeholder groups – parents and families, students, teachers, support service providers such as counselors, paraprofessionals, administrators, policymakers, higher education leaders, community groups, businesses, and religious institutions. All the speakers and panelists are listed in Appendix A of this report.

Highlights from the pre-conference workshops and the conference itself follow the opening remarks made by Superintendent Rojas.

THE CHALLENGE

Overcoming Barriers to Inequality

Dr. Waldemar Rojas

In the five years since I have been in San Francisco, we have seen our children continuing to rise in their academic achievement. We have seen our students attending the California state universities and graduating at a higher percentage than students from any other county in the San Francisco Bay area. At a time when you can pick up the paper and see stories about a decline in enrollment and academic eligibility, we continue to change that in the San Francisco Unified School District.

We had great joy in August 1997 when we were going to announce reading and math results, and just after that the improved SAT results. There was great joy, but there was also a moment when we had to look at the depth of that data and we also had some real sorrow. We found that our gains were not being made quickly, dramatically, or effectively enough for our students who are African American, our students who are Latino, and our students who are English-language learners. Some folks would take great joy in the gains we made. But we have this statement that we constantly make in this school district that "we will not leave a single child behind."

Who Is Eligible To Go To College?

I have some results from 1990; those from 1996 are just being published. Who is eligible to go to a four-year college? Unfortunately in 1996 it's less than it was in 1990. Who is eligible to go to college? When I go to our schools and we look at our class-size reduction programs for kindergarten kids, we say every single one of them is eligible to go to college. Our responsibility in public education is to provide them the best of opportunities. But the reality is that from that 100 percent of our kids who start off at age 5 with great enthusiasm and great joy, not all of them complete their education. Who is eventually eligible to go to college, to attend the four-year university system? We see that only 12 percent of Latinos and 14 percent of African American students get all the way through that process.

Is that process so rigorous? Is that process so impossible? No, it is not. Three years of math, three years of science with laboratory components, four years of English, three years of social studies. It is not an impossible task. It is very much doable by every student who is here – every single one of them. Not everybody is getting the quality programs that prepare students for college. There is absolutely no reason why every student in San Francisco should not get that opportunity to succeed. You see the reality – not all do.

Why do I want everyone to go to college? What is this about? When I came here in 1992 they asked me about my mission. I replied, "to get every kid to go to college." They said, "oh, that's not real. Nobody does that." Nobody does that because nobody tries to do that. We're going to try to do that. We're going to try to get everybody to achieve at or above the national average. If you don't try, and if you don't set a goal, you can be sure you won't reach it.

Schooling Pays Off

How does school pay off? If, in fact, you want a job, the better and the more education you have, the more opportunities will be open to you. Thirty years ago in the United States of America there were only 2,500 millionaires, most of them who inherited their money. Today, there are 63,000 millionaires, and much of that came from skills, finance, real estate, and technology, lots of skills that have been developed in this technological information age, in this knowledge age. That kind of opportunity pays off depending on the quality of education you receive and the education you continue to receive throughout your life. I just finished going to school a few years ago — I had to figure out how to go back to school for another degree. So at 51 it was really nice to have my daughters with me as I completed my degree. And it was really nice to see that they were going to be inspired to continue on for their own particular degrees.

Education is not a process that you begin in kindergarten and that you end on a given date. Education is a process that you live through and that you go through constantly, regularly adding to it. Schooling does pay off. The quality of education that you receive is extremely important.

Getting Out of the Poverty Trap

People reminded me that there are a lot of people who are poor and asked me what I would do about that. Educate them. The best

way to stop being poor is to have an education and get a job. The best way to stop the cycle of poverty is to get an education. So when people look at me and say, it's welfare. I say, well, my mother was poor, my father died when I was quite young, my mother was on welfare. She had a bad heart, she had six kids. She lived in a tenement in the South Bronx. She didn't have any money. But not having money does not mean you need to be poor. There were museums, there were cultural centers, there were places to visit. Here in San Francisco, there are dozens of rich, cultural, educational institutions and on some days you don't have to pay to go to them. There are free Wednesdays.

When I go there, sometimes on free Wednesdays, I do not see the kind of representation that I see when I visit our schools in terms of the diversity. I often tease and say that if you have a counter in your left hand to count all of the students who are not African American or Latino and you have a counter in your right hand to count all the African Americans and Latinos, you are going to have a strong left arm. The left counter is going to keep on being clicked, but the one in the right hand is only going to be clicked a few times.

So it is not always about money and poverty. It is about opportunity, access, and standards. It is about what you wish to learn. It is about grasping at the opportunities that are there. John Dewey, way back in 1916, was talking about "education being the opportunity to overcome the social limitations to which you were born." Lots of people came to this country without two nickels and they succeeded. They succeeded through the system of public education. That is what makes this country so terrific. Everybody has the opportunity. But we have to make sure that opportunity is equitable and excellent for all.

For me, it is a great joy to visit some of our schools. We have some of the best science laboratories in this city and county, some that could even compete with the University of California – San Francisco. We are very concerned that all of the students get the opportunity. So we're very proud of our students who did not have the money, but many are achieving very close to the national average and others are achieving above the national average.

Some of the students in this audience are not aware of the Coleman Report that said they are not supposed to make it. They know that they *are* supposed to make it. They don't know about the

foolishness of a bell curve. They know that their job is to get a quality education. If we can have our youngsters in Bay View-Hunters Point and in the Portola District succeed, why can't we have all of our youngsters succeed? There are lots of other schools and we need the strategies and the partners to be certain that all of our youngsters can yet achieve that same level of excellence. Not one is left behind. Schooling is important.

Change Begins Today

So why now? Why are we having this conference now? The answer is because we weren't smart enough five years ago. We should have done it five years ago. But we're doing it now because today is the best day that there is. We're not going to do it next year or the year after, we're going to do it now. We're going to improve student achievement and find those strategies and make that commitment so that education works now. The people in this city and county have done outrageous and good things. They have taxed themselves over and over and over so there are lots of wonderful school buildings. There will be new laboratories, there will be improved technology, the buildings will be painted, the roofs will not leak, the windows will work. That is important. But that is not as important as the power of our teaching and learning by our students. We're going to continue to focus on that. We have tremendous, powerful teachers. We have tremendous, powerful school administrators. We are going to figure out how -- with this combination of great kids, great teachers, great administrators -- we can have a community that is more supportive of education. How can we help with mentors and tutors and job opportunities? How can churches get involved?

Education is not about four walls and a school campus alone. It is about a community. There is an old African proverb that says it takes the entire village to raise a child. Well, it takes the entire village to educate our children. This is a call to action to get the entire village involved, regardless of faith. Presbyterians can read as well as Episcopalians as well as the Roman Catholics. We want everybody to read. We want everybody to understand the issues in mathematics. We want the best possible quality that we can find.

Recently the Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute in coordination with the United Negro College Fund found that African American students who graduate from college receive salaries that

are comparable with other students when they graduate from college. So the equity issue can be there. The question is, who is going to graduate from college? In San Francisco, every one of our students needs to be prepared to live independently, to make those economic gains. We are going to work on enhancing our skills and our strategies so that all of our students succeed and succeed very, very well. Inequity in a community cannot be tolerated. You cannot have some students achieve while others do not achieve and profess to be a quality system. Everyone *must* achieve.

We are very grateful for many partners who are helping to make this possible. We are very grateful to AT&T who came forward and put together a group of corporations including GAP, IBM and PG&E and PACBELL to fund this particular conference. AT&T said, "superintendent, we're not only going to provide some of the resources, we're going to give you something better than just cash to do that. We're going to give you our people. We're going to give you our heart. We're going to give you our commitment. So it is very nice to see persons who understand the crisis and are stepping forward and saying all of the children of San Francisco must succeed.

Our Most Valuable Resource

It is a community thing. It is a vital thing. Our children are our most valuable resource and everybody has to play a part. *Everyone* has to play a part. There can be none of "that's the teacher's job" or "that's the principal's job." It is *our* job. It is our job to make certain that every child in the city and county of San Francisco achieves. When we are done with that, we will go to other places and make sure that all children achieve. We cannot have excellence or a democratic society with people who are not educated well. We need that stability. We need that kind of quality. Any time you think it is not possible, get up from wherever you are and go to our schools and see how possible it is. Let us give them the tools to succeed. We have the best and the brightest, and now we are going to give our students continued opportunities so that they can hire us when they become the CEOs of their companies.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

What follows are highlights from the preconference workshops and the two-day summit. In this summary, the emphasis is on what was said rather than who said it.

Mentoring And Counseling Students

Effective mentoring, advising and counseling of students is a significant component in improving the academic achievement of African American students. The consensus of the panelists was that many people can play a role in this process besides professionally trained counselors. Parents, teachers, and ministers, for example, can play important roles. Some highlights of the panelists' comments:

- Counseling begins in the home. African American parents and other family members can begin to sensitize children at a very early age about the importance of doing well in school. Families can also make children aware of the barriers that might be put in their paths because of race. At the same time they can constantly reinforce that they are important, that they have the ability to achieve if they work hard, and that they can overcome the barriers of race and poverty by excelling in school.
- Historically, the church has played an important role in the African American community, and it can play a significant role in helping to boost the academic achievement of African American youngsters. The church can help youngsters develop a sense of spirituality, a sense of self worth, and a respect for human life. The church can also become a resource center where young people can be tutored and counseled and where they can receive psychological support from successful adults. The church, with its strong and stable members, can become a formidable force in the education of our children.
- It is important to respect our elders. Elders have wisdom that they may not be able to articulate on paper, but we can listen to them about the values of the old.
- Schools cannot always afford to hire people who are specially trained as counselors, but teachers can become good counselors. Being a good counselor means being a good listener and being able

to help young people come up with rational solutions and rational strategies to problems they are faced with on a day-to-day basis.

- African American teachers have always been revered in the community. Many successful African American adults today were inspired by teachers who encouraged them to succeed. These teachers were seen as special people because they took an active interest in student learning and the lives of their students. Teachers must work hard to educate our children and parents must teach children to respect their teachers and administrators.
- Counselors need to be aware of the issues and concerns of students and help guide students in the proper direction.
- Counselors must involve parents in the counseling process. By bringing together students and parents, counselors can ensure that the best direction for youngsters is sought, pursued, and obtained.
- Counselors should explain the history of racism to our children and help them overcome the inequalities in American life.
- Children who are in trouble must be sought out by the school district. Homeless children, who are living in very unfortunate and extreme circumstances, can be led by the schools past what may seem to be a hopeless situation. Teachers can never think that the situation is "hopeless."
- Mentoring is an effective tool for counseling African American students. Mentors can recall the issues they faced in the past. They can help develop hope as well as confidence, which are related to success.
- A cascading mentoring program, used at the Morehouse School of Medicine, could be applied to public school students. The medical school is located in a low income section of Atlanta with close proximity to several low income housing projects. Each college student has a professional mentor but also serves as a mentor to a high school student. The high school student will be a mentor for a middle school student, and the middle school student will be a mentor for an elementary school student.
- Mentors should be viewed as helpers and as task masters. Mentor relationships may be highly structured or informal and short term or long term.
- Building each youngster's self esteem is critical.

- Attending classes is critical to student achievement. Mentors will teach students that education is key to their welfare, and their growth and development.
- Parents might have to use the "tough love" approach with their children by taking away something they like in order to increase their motivation to excel.
- Parents also need to be concerned and involved in the education of their children. They must find time in their schedules, no matter how busy they are, to play an active part in their child's education.

The Role of Test Scores

The SFUSD superintendent is working toward bringing the test scores of African American, Latino, and immigrant children in San Francisco to the national average by 1999. Although outsiders may view this as a "gutsy" promise, it is neither unusual nor unreasonable to expect students to perform at the 50th percentile. About one-third of African American students in the SFUSD live in public housing, which is more than any other racial or ethnic group. This means that a disproportionate number of African American students are poor, and socioeconomic status could be a factor in student performance.

- Students will do better if they understand the importance of doing well on standardized tests.
- Parents should read to children. Reading expands the mind.
- Monitor TV watching, both the time spent watching and the content of the programs. Decrease TV viewing time, especially of programs that focus on violence and sex, and increase educational reading time.
- Take children to the library and bring home books to read. Reward children for reading.
- African American students need to attend class and engage their minds in academic exercises.
- Parents need to get involved and be involved. They should share experiences with children, go to parent-teacher conferences and go on field trips with the children.
- Students will do better if they get plenty of sleep before a test and eat a warm breakfast.
- It is important to constantly remind youngsters that they need to go to school and that they can do well.

- Make a place for children to study, a place where they are most comfortable. Turn off the TV during study time.

Supporting Youth Development

The religious and business communities should be tapped to support youth development and academic achievement. Other factors can have a positive impact on academic achievement such as properly trained teachers and an environment conducive to learning.

- It is important to create a positive and orderly learning environment.
- Class attendance and academic engagement is critical for student development and achievement.
- The best teachers should be rewarded through the salary structure and by providing them with classroom resources.
- Make sure teachers know math. African American students can learn, but they need to have quality and competent instruction in the classroom.
- Companies do what they think is expected of them, and communities can tell the business community how it can help. Companies do not give in a comprehensive way to schools, so communities must propose what is needed from them. We need a return on what we invest in white businesses.
- African American business people should serve as mentors.

From School to Career

- Every African American child should have a dream. Make sure that each child has a dream and help keep that child's dream alive.
- Urge youngsters to set high goals and support them for establishing high goals.
- Teach young people how to create a game plan and how to revise it. Youngsters should write down their mission, their objectives, and what they need to accomplish their objectives. They also need to identify the tasks to reach their goals and the challenges that will confront them.
- Students need to have a strong team behind them to support their efforts. People who succeed in life have a team behind them. A single football player cannot win a game, but a team can win. An

effective team for youngsters could be a parent, an aunt, an uncle, and a cousin.

- Focus on reading and mathematics achievement.
- Partnerships among teachers, students, parents, and the community are critical.

Ownership, Accountability and Responsibility

Although poverty and social circumstances can be formidable barriers to academic achievement, they can be overcome through partnerships — community partnerships and partnerships between students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Strong teams and support systems will help contribute to children's academic success.

- Education and acquisition of technical skills are necessary for survival in an increasingly complex economy.
- All children can learn if teachers work hard, if they are supported by parents, and if students gain the desire and motivation to learn. Students must take responsibility for their own learning.
- The school superintendent's personal commitment is vital.
- There is a correlation between lack of education and prison and between education and wealth. The ability to live well later on in life is tied to how seriously individuals take education.
- It is important to appreciate education and work hard for it.
- Teachers need to believe in the ability of children to learn and children must be made to believe that they can learn. Teachers must take responsibility for teaching and the learning of the child.
- There is no such thing as spending too much time celebrating academic victories and accomplishments.
- Solutions and good ideas should be based on educational research.
- Essential ingredients for improving achievement include having strong instructional leadership.
- Everyone should understand the mission of the school and maintain a clear instructional focus.
- The school climate should be positive, clean and orderly, but not rigid.
- Everyone should hold high expectations for student success.

- Student progress should be assessed frequently to monitor outcomes. Students should understand what is expected of them at given points in time.
- Try to accommodate different learning styles.
- Early childhood education lays the foundation for academic performance as students progress through the curriculum. This is particularly important for developing math skills.
- Multicultural programs in the school curriculum are key. Activities should be planned that address racial conflicts and racial prejudice.
- Staff development is needed to bring teachers up to date, and to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to do their jobs. Teachers should know basic content in reading and math.
- "Schools within a school" can help to decrease unit size and foster educational achievement.
- In segregated school systems, black teachers believed that black children could learn. They cared about their students and that made a difference. How do we bring this belief to non-segregated school environments?
- Harmful practices such as tracking, retention without support, and excessive pullouts must be rooted out.
- Foster positive relationships between non-classroom school personnel and students.
- Everyone has a role in education. Education does not take place in a vacuum; it involves a number of support systems. Students need to take responsibility for their grades. If they do not do well, they cannot blame it on teachers and their peers. They must look at themselves and try to come up with ways to do better the next time around.
- Collect achievement data to see where students are having difficulty. Data should be gathered districtwide on a monthly basis and used to increase teacher competence and student learning.
- There should be a formal contract between home, school, and students. This contract would include a commitment to showing up for school on time, attending classes, and parents' commitment to being involved in their children's education.
- "Best practice" coaches can reinforce what works in the classroom.

- Adults need to listen to the students. Students need to know they are somebody and they need to be heard.
- Parents need to take care of themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually so they can help their children.
- Parents must continue to grow and learn, especially young parents. Teen parents need to recognize that they can be good parents. If teen parents do not provide their children with a good education, their children could become teen parents.
- The parent/child/school relationship must begin in kindergarten. It is the beginning of a 13-year program.
- Parents need to be politically active and support educational initiatives.
- Students should not allow their peers to discourage them from getting a good education.
- Teachers must require students to think rather than simply memorize information.
- Students should be involved in activities outside the classroom.

Achieving in Math and Reading

The primary focus of the partnership summit was to explore ways to enhance mathematics and reading levels of African American students and overcoming barriers that interfere with success.

- The homeroom and classroom environment should be positive.
- Students must learn to listen, speak, read, and write well.
- Push students toward hard work, greater persistence, and dedication.
- Tell students they can learn math.
- Entice them to learn math
- The residential boarding school model has been effective (The Piney Woods School in Mississippi). A strong work ethic is instilled in students who work 10 hours a week at their school.
- Strong social systems affect educational outcomes, so the systems must be examined and changed when necessary.
- Students need to engage in non-futile behavior, and eliminate the notion that their situations are futile.
- Parents need to create evening environments that are conducive to learning and achieving.
- Student initiative and involvement are important.

- Create teams of strength such as study clubs with people who have strengths in math, science, writing and reading.
- Children need to learn how to learn.
- Students who read well will get better at learning how to read.
- Algebra is the gateway to further mathematical study. The San Francisco Algebra Project is an effective five-step program that moves students from concrete experiences to abstract mathematics.

Achieving Change

- Parents, mentors and setting goals are keys to academic success.
- Students should be encouraged to seek out peers who share their interests and goals.
- Students should be encouraged to put their studies ahead of fun activities. They need to see that learning can be fun, too.
- Students need to develop their listening skills.
- Instill in students the importance of hard work, patience and persistence.
- Promote students' self esteem.
- Encourage students to attend school and attend classes.
- Students need to accept the importance of trying to learn, staying in school, asking questions, not yielding to peer pressure, and staying focused on their studies.
- Everyone needs to speak out about education.
- Relationships with young people and showing that adults care about their education is important in the education of African American youngsters.
- Community involvement is needed in education.
- Parents need to have more power in education. Schools should embrace parents and welcome their support.
- A well thought-out educational plan is needed.
- Large high schools must be broken down into smaller, nurturing environments.
- Parents, families, and other stakeholders need to have a better understanding of the relationship between education, opportunity, and prosperity.
- Provide strategies that strengthen students' hope and commitment to achieve at higher levels.

- Extend and sustain the conference dialogue into the broader community on a continuing basis.
- Form math clubs, have science nights and science fairs.
- Schools at their worst are better than jails at their best. Develop the theme of building schools, not jails.
- Teachers' expectations are important.
- Students are more successful in schools that have parental and community support.
- Students must understand that excellence is color-blind.
- Reinforce and reward "best practice" in effective teaching of reading and mathematics.
- Building bridges makes things better and sooner. Bridges should be built between schools and churches, colleges, and community-based organizations.
- Teachers must learn techniques to improve African American students' achievement.
- African American parents should impose curfew on youngsters. Youngsters on the streets, single or in groups, can lead to trouble.
- A good teacher is someone who is caring, competent and a disciplinarian.
- The curriculum should be challenging and competent teachers should be attracted.
- Provide opportunities to parents to come into the schools and work with their own child.
- Lending libraries for parents can help parents continue to grow and improve their own education.
- Students need to be praised and encouraged constantly. Compliment children frequently.
- Let students know what is expected of them.

A Blueprint for Action

The National Council on Educating Black Children developed a Blueprint for Action which focuses on education in general and urban education in particular. It consolidates ideas and information from all the stakeholders in the education of African American children – students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and business and community leaders. Stakeholders attending the summit shared their ideas about how achievement levels can be raised among African American students.

- Thinking needs to be in the context of the Blueprint for Action.
- Education must be the Number One priority in the African American community.
- African American students must have unconditional support in the schools.
- The school needs to be a substitute family.
- Teachers must genuinely care about and be committed to educating inner city youngsters.
- Self esteem and confidence among African American youngsters must be bolstered. Children must believe in themselves.
- Students need family support.
- Students need to be exposed to successful African American role models.
- Adopt a mentoring system — "each one, reach one."
- Create jobs in the African American community via education.

The preceding highlights were the foundation for a list of more than 100 recommendations generated by conference attendees. The list of recommendations was pared down and organized under nine headings. These recommendations are listed in the next section of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this report were adapted from a list of about 125 made by youth, parents, teachers, administrators, national education consultants, and ministers who attended the African American Community Education Partnership Summit. It is believed that these recommendations will move the San Francisco Unified School District toward achieving its goal of significantly improving overall academic achievement, and specifically math and science achievement, among African American and Latino students.

In addition to these recommendations, it is strongly suggested that the district continue to make a concerted effort to reach out to students in the bottom quartile. These students tend to be from low income families who live in public housing and from families of homeless people. Even though the SFUSD has children who come from middle and upper income families, it also has children who come from significant poverty. They are sorely in need of our help and support. Several of the recommendations listed below place particular emphasis on the importance of reaching out to students and parents in public housing and the children of homeless people.

According to a "Description of the Homeless Population in San Francisco," from the office of Mayor Willie Brown, there are over 2,000 homeless youth being served by the Homeless Youth Network in San Francisco. The majority of these youth cannot return home and must obtain the education and skills to support themselves. In addition, almost two-thirds of families in shelters are single parents and a significant number of their children are under 5 years of age. However, efforts are being made to address the homeless problem by political leaders such as Mayor Brown and by religious leaders such as the Rev. Cecil Williams of Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco. For additional strategies on addressing the needs of the homeless, see remarks made by Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, Community 2020 Symposium, Washington, D.C., Jan. 14, 1998.

The conference recommendations fall into nine areas:

1. Academic or school year
2. Community partnerships

3. Evaluation methods and procedures
4. Teachers—pay, qualifications and procedures
5. Parental involvement
6. Mentoring, advising, counseling and school participation
7. Standardized tests— test-taking skills, preparation, etc.
8. Curriculum design and improvements
9. Staff development

1. **Academic or school year**

1.1. Extend the school year for children who have not attended pre-school.

1.2. Provide flexibility in time and scheduling to provide opportunity for depth of instruction even if the school year must be lengthened.

1.3. Develop summer institutes focusing on reading and math with area colleges and universities such as the University of California-Berkeley, San Francisco State University, City College of San Francisco, Stanford University and San Jose State University.

2. **Community partnerships**

2.1. Secure commitments from individual community churches to develop and implement Weekend (Saturday) Math and Reading Academies. Their commitment should be for a time duration that, at its minimum, matches the date which the district has identified for reaching its math and reading goals. Parents with children who attend Sunday school or Sunday worship services should be called on to exert pressure on their respective churches to make this commitment. In general, churches need to support the importance of educational goals for children who are church members and/or live in the community that surrounds the church. Additionally, the idea of a partnership between one church and one school carries much promise.

2.2. Rites of Passage Programs, which are a part of various grassroots organizations and community center programming, can be arenas in which reading and math proficiency can be encouraged. Efforts should be made to include appropriate levels of reading and math proficiency as a part of what it means to assume certain responsibilities, meet certain obligations, and rise to certain challenges as young African American males and females "come of age" through such programs.

2.3. Beginning at the middle school level and intensifying efforts at the high school level, explore opportunities to develop school-to-work partnerships with local businesses. Research shows that, over the long run, businesses involved in such programs increase their commitment to and involvement with the school. Moreover, when school-to-work opportunities are created for students interested in careers that require high levels of reading and math proficiency (such as engineering, print journalism and library science) those students are more likely to remain in school and excel in their chosen areas.

2.4. Develop work programs that allow students from low income homes to work while pursuing their education.

2.5. Develop tutorial and other support services directed to assist public housing and homeless children. Support of low income and homeless children should be one of the highest educational priorities because these children, as a group, consistently perform in the bottom quartile.

2.6. Develop work strategies that can help break the cycle of dependency.

2.7. Explore the feasibility of providing employment opportunities for high school students that pay above

the minimum wage and perhaps provide health benefits.

2.8. Hold graduation in the churches or some other community-sanctioned location, if possible. If graduation is held at the school, churches should hold a special ceremony afterward to honor the graduates.

2.9. Black churches should dedicate one Sunday per month as Education Day and teachers should be encouraged to provide on–site tutoring on those days.

2.10. An individual should be designated to work with Ministers, heads of community-based organizations and parents, especially those living in public housing. This coordinator's role will be to help engage students in all academic school activities.

2.11. Retired educators who are active church members should be recruited to mentor and tutor African American youngsters. Special tutorial efforts through the churches should be established for public housing students and those from homeless families. *[This recommendation has already been implemented at Providence Baptist Church under the leadership of the Rev. Calvin Jones.]*

2.12. Churches should develop after-school programs to reinforce school objectives and also recruit retired seniors to tutor and mentor students.

2.13. African American women and men should make a personal and public statement in support of their children and follow up by serving as role models, mentor, and tutors.

2.14. Encourage the business community to provide financial support to assist the school district and the

community in implementing the recommendations from this summit.

3. **Evaluation methods and procedures**

3.1. Develop, modify, or reinforce the policy statement that includes the school district mission, values, objective measures of improvement, and goals for student achievement. This policy statement should be approved by the board of education and shared with administrators, teachers, parents, and students. The policy statement should be developed into a plan of action to be implemented.

3.2. Build in program evaluation at the onset of all programs to assess what works and what does not. Use this information to modify, discard, or retain programs so that one gets "more bang for the buck."

3.3. Conduct separate focus groups with parents, teachers, and students to learn what they perceive to be barriers to academic success. Strategies to remove barriers to academic success should be developed and implemented.

4. **Teachers—pay, qualifications and procedures**

4.1. Recruit teachers with reading and math certification when possible, and provide training for teachers who are currently teaching math and reading but who are not certified to teach in those areas.

4.2. Develop opportunities for math and reading teachers to supplement their incomes by participating in mini Winter (Christmas break) or Summer institutes designed to help them become knowledgeable about current methods in teaching reading and math and to improve their individual pedagogies. Salary levels must be sufficient to retain the best math and reading teachers as well as to attract the best and brightest college students to the district's classrooms.

4.3. Consider hiring, via distance education, persons like Ms. Rosalind Hurley-Richards, 1997 Kentucky Teacher of the Year, to teach via teleconferencing.

4.4. Make teachers' salaries competitive enough to attract teachers from diverse backgrounds, especially African American and other minority teachers, with the skills and training in content, method, and child development to improve and maintain academic performance.

4.5. Encourage the district to work with the city to explore the development of affordable housing for middle income, African American teachers, and help teachers with financing homes.

4.6. Encourage the business community to provide relocation funds to minority teachers willing to move to San Francisco to work in the SFUSD.

4.7. Provide the necessary support and renewal activities for teachers to get the job done and to prevent burnout of otherwise excellent teachers.

5. **Parental involvement**

5.1. Open three parent centers with tutorial services and an emphasis on reading, math, science and cultural history.

5.2. Notify parents when children under-perform in reading and math and encourage them to have their children participate in the summer institutes proposed in recommendation 1.3.

5.3. Provide parents with handbooks that will help them nurture an academically successful child from birth to 12th grade. One handbook would detail, for example, grade-appropriate reading materials and math and science expectations. Other handbooks would contain health and nutrition tips.

5.4. Provide free health screening such as eye examinations, referrals and follow-up at all academic sites.

5.5. Develop intensive outreach efforts to encourage parents in public housing to become involved in their children's academic achievement.

5.6. Develop intensive outreach multi-service centers to try to involve homeless parents in the education of their children.

5.7. Set up and implement programs to encourage parents to help their children "off" the streets, to stay in school, attend class, and engage in academic excellence.

6. **Mentoring, advising, counseling and school participation**

6.1. Place a greater emphasis on student development and counseling that involves parents, teachers, and students. Counselors should be hired with backgrounds in race and social class diversity.

6.2. Develop an active and effective strategy to encourage African American students to attend school and to attend classes. Research has demonstrated a strong relationship between school attendance and academic achievement. Principals should develop with the faculty a plan to ensure that students are attending classes.

6.3. Continue to create effective leadership skills at the local school level.

6.4. Creative a "roving" panel of outstanding teachers, students and parents who will travel to schools in the district to encourage others to aspire and achieve excellence. When it is not possible to travel, use two-way videoconferencing.

6.5. Enhance and elevate "student achievement days."

7. **Standardized tests — test-taking skills, preparation, etc.**

7.1. Administer a simulated standardized test like the SAT beginning no later than the first year of high school with the intent of having youngsters master it. Develop an awards program complete with prizes for students who perform well and provide extra help for students who do not. Invite Skylar Bird, an African American female who earned a perfect score on her SATs in 1996, to speak at the school.

7.2. Hire an administrator or a teacher who specializes in test-taking techniques, and require students to attend a "test-taking" class. This administrator's job description should be related to developing in teachers an awareness of test-taking strategies.

8. **Curriculum design and improvements**

8.1. Place stronger emphasis on the development of reading and math skills in the first three grades. Reading and math skill acquisition should be a major district priority in the early grades.

8.2. Require algebra, geometry, and biology for graduation for all students in the district.

8.3. The expression, "it's not what you call me, it's what I answer to," has significance as we consider the recommendation that the term *student* be replaced with *young scholar* or *young achiever*. Efforts made to alter self-perceptions through language and labels can be quite successful, especially when faculty, staff, and administrator attitudes and behaviors further support such positive characterizations.

8.4. Early identification of scholars should receive a higher priority than early identification of athletes.

8.5. Identify low income, low performing students early in their academic career and target them for special support.

8.6. Bring in celebrities—athletes, astronauts, scholars and scientists—to convey concepts such as Michael Jordan's "math made easy" using basketball scenarios.

8.7. Adopt computers as an integral part of learning and teaching, and provide computer training for teachers.

8.8. Use rote learning as a means of discipline as well as learning.

8.9. Focus on the development of listening skills for African American students. Disciplined behavior and the development of listening skills should be strongly emphasized.

8.10. Explore the feasibility of developing a residential program in the SFUSD patterned after The Piney Woods School in Mississippi.

9. **Staff Development**

9.1. Provide staff development for administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parent groups that focuses on sensitivity to diverse areas such as race and social class.

When appropriate, the Blueprint for Action should be used as a framework for implementing recommendations.

The newly-formed Parent Involvement Articulation Council could become an umbrella for the involvement of parents in the education of African American students.

SUMMARY

More than 700 people attended this summit that brought together administrators and teachers in the San Francisco Unified School District and a cross-section of the African American community that included ministers, civic leaders, representatives of community-based organizations, students and parents. Especially significant was the unified voice and singular goal of this diverse population. All were focused on the critical need to increase student achievement of African American students, especially in reading and mathematics.

Factors contributing to low achievement were identified during the conference, such as poverty, poor health, poor class attendance, and high absenteeism. Ways to overcome barriers to achievement were addressed as were numerous strategies to improve reading and mathematics. A particular emphasis was placed on improving the low level of academic achievement among poor children, public housing children, and children of the homeless. Many people voiced the opinion that if these groups could experience a rise in achievement, it would have a positive, system-wide impact.

The goal of the SFUSD, articulated by Dr. Waldemar Rojas, Superintendent, is to bring all African American children up to the national average in reading and mathematics. Summit attendees agreed that this goal is achievable if there is good administrative leadership, if teachers have high expectations for student success, if parents are actively involved in the education of their children, and if education is the number one priority in the African American community.

This report has provided specific and practical recommendations and policy implications that flowed from the conference, Two activities related to the recommendations are already in motion. At one church, more than 40 senior citizens are tutoring youngsters in reading and math. Also, a major workshop planned by a community group in conjunction with the SFUSD will be held. The workshop will focus on developing strategies to keep young people off the streets and get them involved in school engaged in academic tasks so they will achieve academic excellence.

The conference ended on the resounding note that *all children can learn!*

POLICY IMPLICATIONS
FROM THE SUMMIT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education must become the major priority within the African American community.

2. Extend educational experiences for kindergarten and 1st grade students who have not had at least one year of preschool.

3. Community churches in partnership with schools should fully open their doors to school children and enrich them with school-related educational material.

4. Reading, mathematics, science, and computer instruction should be a school district priority, supplemented by community-based evening tutorial support.

5. Develop a school district policy statement that includes mission, values, and goals for student achievement.

6. Create district-mandated staff development programs focusing on race, ethnic, and social class sensitivity for teachers and administrators.

7. A partnership strategy should be developed and maintained to get school age students off the streets, in class, and involved in academic excellence.

8. Open additional parent learning centers with a focus on reading, math, and science supplemented by cultural history.

9. Develop new strategies to attract African American and other minority teachers to the SFUSD. These strategies should include affordable housing and relocation incentives. Request support from the business community.

10. Increase academic support efforts for public housing and homeless school children. This strategy should include health screening, with an emphasis on hearing, vision, and nutrition.

Appendix A

Summit Program Participants

National Speakers

Dr. Charles Beady, President, Piney Woods Country Life School, Piney Woods, Mississippi

Eleanor Williams Curry, Director, African American Entrustment Group

Dr. Nancy Ellis, Executive Director, Accelerated Learning Project, Chicago, Illinois

Dr. Peter Flynn, Superintendent of Schools, Fayette County, Lexington, Kentucky

Dr. Robert L. Green, Summit Education Consultant, Michigan State University

Dr. Thomas Gunnings, Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

Dr. James Hawkins, Superintendent, Gary Indiana Public Schools

Dr. Willie W. Herenton, Mayor, Memphis, Tennessee, and Former Superintendent of Memphis City Schools

Rosalind Hurley-Richards, 1997 Kentucky Teacher of the Year, Fayette County Public Schools, Lexington, Kentucky

Dr. Marilyn M. Irving, School of Education, Howard University, Washington, D.C.

Gordon Johnson, Director, W. K. Kellogg Foundation Collaborative on African American Males, Chicago, Illinois

Al Nellums, Business Leader, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Rod Paige, Superintendent, Houston, Texas, Public Schools

Dr. George T. Rowan, Director, David Walker Research Institute, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

John C. Smith, MSW, Community Health, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia

Dr. David Snead, Superintendent, Detroit (Michigan) Public Schools

Willie Sutton, Education Manager, Viron/York International, Riverside, Missouri

SFUSD Administrators and Teachers

Dr. E. Anthony Anderson, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Mary Boehnlein, Reading Consultant

Marian Currell, Algebra Project, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School
Linda Davis, Deputy Superintendent
Larry DelCarlo, School to Work, SFUSD
Janee Edwards, Director, African American Parent and Family Resource Center
Yvette Fagan, Teacher, Bryant Elementary School
Michael "Chappie" Grice, Director of I.R.I.S.E. (Infusing Responsibilities for Intellectual and Scholastic Excellence)
Dr. Robert Harrington, Director, Planning, Research, and Evaluation
Mrs. Fredna Howell, Principal, Phillip and Sala Burton High School
Keith Jackson, President, SFUSD Board of Education
Kevin Jefferson, Paraprofessional, McAteer High School
Louise Jones, Principal, Dr. George Washington Carver Academic Elementary School
Shirley Howard-Johnson, Summit Consultant
Sandy Lam, Math Consultant
Hoover Liddell, Planning, Research and Evaluation
Tony Lincoln, School to Work, SFUSD
Don Mitchell, Principal, Washington High School
Steve Phillips, Commissioner, SFUSD Board of Education
Dr. Waldemar Rojas, Superintendent
Jacqueline Rushing, Parent/Teacher, Burton High School
Maria Santos, Associate Superintendent
George Sloan, Principal, J. Eugene McAteer High School
James Taylor Jr., Principal, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School

Community and Government

Dr. Henry Augustine, Counselor, City College of San Francisco
The Rev. Amos Brown, Pastor, Supervisor, City of San Francisco
The Honorable Willie L. Brown, Mayor, City of San Francisco
Leonard (Lefty) Gordon, Director, Ella Hill Hutch Community Center
The Rev. Martin Grizzell, Ella Hill Hutch Community Center
Aileen Hernandez, Educational Consultant, San Francisco
James Jefferson, Past President, San Francisco Black Chamber of Commerce
The Rev. Calvin Jones Jr., Providence Baptist Church

Joe Marshall, Executive Director, Omega Boys Club, San Francisco
The Rev. James McCray, Pastor, Jones Methodist Church
Lulann McGriff, Chair, San Francisco NAACP Education Committee,and Chair, Counseling Department, San Francisco City College
Winston Miller, Mayor's Office
Margaret Norris, Academic Coordinator, Omega Boys Club
Sybil Robinson, Jenga Consulting, Inc.
James Thigpen, San Francisco Business Leader
Earl White, San Francisco Black Chamber of Commerce
Jamie Williams, Williams Consulting Group
Pat Womack, Teacher, Ella Hill Hutch Community Center

Parents and Students

Niya Brown, School of the Arts-SFUSD
Marlyn Bussey, Parent, Marshall High School
Monica Bussey, Student, Marshall High School
Janice Cook, Parent, Claire Lilienthal Alternative School
Maurice Crayton, Student, Phillip and Sala Burton High School
Eleanor Williams Curry
Duriel Davis, Student, George Washington High School
Rabihah Davis, School of the Arts-SFUSD
Brandy Fontenot, Student, J. Eugene McAteer High School
Beverly Gartrell, Parent, Claire Lilienthal Alternative School
Amber Love, Student, George Washington High School
Talia McClure, Student, McAteer High School
Eric Morris, Student, Marshall High School
Edward Rivera, Student, Mission High School
Tairinda Rushing, Student, Phillip and Sala Burton High School
Demetra Ryan, Student, Lowell High School
Jamil Sheared, Student Lowell High School
Geoffrea Simpson, Student, Phillip and Sala Burton High School

Participating Churches

Bethel AME Church, The Rev. Edgar Boyd
Ingleside Presbyterian Church, The Rev. Roland Gordon
Jones Methodist Church, Dr. James McCray
Muslim Mosque, Min. Christopher Muhammad

Providence Baptist Church, The Rev. Calvin Jones, Jr.,
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, The Rev. Kenneth Westray
San Francisco Christian Center, The Rev. Donald Green
Third Baptist Church, The Rev. Amos Brown

SFUSD Committee Members
African American Summit on Student Achievement

Eleanor Williams-Curry,
Co-Chair
Aileen C. Hernandez,
Co-Chair
E. Anthony Anderson
Bridget Anderson
Del Anderson
Bernice Brown
Barbara E.M. Cannon
Barbara Crist
Paul Church
Erma Cobb
Ronald Colthirst
Linda S. Crayton
Louis Garrett
Beverly Gartrell
Leonard (Lefty) Gordon
Michael Chappie Grice
The Rev. Calvin Jones, Jr.
Tim Jones
Cynthia Le Blanc
Hoover Liddell
Nat Mason
Rusty May
The Rev. James McCray, Jr.
LuLann McGriff
Aleea McGuire
Dee Minor
Effie Lee Jones
Donald R. Mitchell
Alex Pitcher
Kenyon A. Price
Rita R. Semel
Savanah W. Smith
Sari Swig
James M. Taylor, Jr.
Thomas Taylor
James M. Todd II
Doris Ward
Fran White
MoniqueWilliams
Alex Wong

Appendix B

Report Authors

Robert L. Green A nationally known scholar and expert on urban issues and school reform, Robert L. Green is a former president of the University of the District of Columbia and dean of the College of Urban Development at Michigan State University (MSU). Currently he is a professor with the David Walker Research Institute, MSU College of Human Medicine.

Dr. Green, who has served as an expert witness in court cases related to education and employment discrimination has written extensively on race, poverty, education, employment, and the incarceration of African American males. He is the author of several books including *The Urban Challenge: Poverty and Race* and *Metropolitan Desegregation.*

A consultant and advisor to college presidents, urban school superintendents, and mayors of major urban communities, Dr. Green earned a Ph.D. in educational psychology from MSU.

Ronald E. Hall A former clinical social worker and internationally known author, Ronald E. Hall is a scholar for the David Walker Research Institute, College of Human Medicine, and assistant professor in the Department of Social Work, Michigan State University.

According to the *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* and the *Men's Review Journal*, he is the leading authority on skin color issues. He testified as an expert witness in the nation's first skin color discrimination case, *Morrow v. IRS*, 1990.

The author of the "bleaching syndrome," an assimilation strategy used by people of color, Dr. Hall is able to address policies such as affirmative action in a different context. He has coauthored and/or contributed to several books including *The Color Complex, The American Black Male*, and *Brotherman*, which won the American Book Award for 1995. His books, *Beyond Black and White* and *Brothers and Basketball* will likely be published in 1998.

Dr. Hall earned an MSW from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. in social work from Atlanta University.

Michael C. Lambert Michael C. Lambert is assistant professor, Department of Psychology, and adjunct professor, David Walker Research Institute, College of Human Medicine, at MSU.

A graduate of Hahnemann Medical College and Bryn Mawr College, he received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Before moving to MSU, he was assistant professor at the University of Mississippi. He is currently honorary lecturer in the Department of Child Health and Department of Psychiatry, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica.

His research interests include taxonomy and measurement of psychopathology in children and families of the African Diaspora, cross-national research on child and adolescent psychopathology, and adult attitudes and behavior regarding child behavior and emotional problems.

Claudette McFadden Claudette McFadden is professor and area coordinator for speech communication and theater at Bethune-Cookman College in Florida. A graduate of Morgan State College and the Ohio State University, Dr. McFadden is in her 24th year of college and university teaching.

She is sought after as a motivational speaker for a variety of audiences and has received numerous awards and recognition for her involvement in community and volunteer activities. Her growing work in the area of service learning has made her an important resource for an increasing number of institutions and organizations interested in the institution, implementation and assessment of service learning initiatives.

George T. Rowan George T. Rowan is a founder and the first director of the David Walker Research Institute in the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University. The Institute is the only one of its kind in a medical school in the nation. Its mission is to conduct research and recommend policy on health and health-related issues directly affecting the lives of African American males in particular, and African Americans in general. Dr. Rowan is also an associate professor in the Department of Resource Development, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

His research interests include environmental equity, African American prostate cancer survivors, emotional and behavior problems of African American youth in Michigan, sudden cardiac death in the African American population, and the prevalence of asthma in northern urban cities.

Dr. Rowan earned his Ph.D. in educational administration from MSU.

Gilbert A. Williams A professor in the Michigan State University Department of Telecommunication, Gilbert Williams is also an associate faculty member of the David Walker Research Institute, MSU College of Human Medicine. In addition, he has been a visiting research professor in the School of Public Health and Department of Preventive Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Dr. Williams is the author of several articles and reports related to public health issues, particularly as they impact African Americans, and to mass communication topics such as radio history. He is the author of *The Christian Recorder, A.M.E. Church, 1854-1902*, and *Legendary Pioneers of Black Radio*, which is scheduled to be published in 1998.

A member of several statewide task forces such as the Prostate Cancer Advisory Committee, Dr. Williams developed a prostate cancer awareness brochure. He also planned, implemented and evaluated a breast and cervical cancer awareness campaign and developed videotapes on cardiovascular health.

Dr. Williams earned a master's in journalism and a Ph.D. in communication from the University of Illinois.

Appendix C

Position Paper

African American Community Education Partnership Summit: Focusing on Reading and Mathematics Achievement

Robert L. Green

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the San Francisco Unified School District's Summit focusing on the education and achievement of African American students cannot be overemphasized. This Summit represents a major and determined effort of educators, parents, and community leaders to unite in the goal of improving the academic achievement of African American children. This academic achievement Summit called by the community and the SFUSD should be seen as a critical phase of the ongoing, joint quest of the African American community and the San Francisco Unified School District to ensure that their children receive the best education possible. The Summit should also be seen as a concerted effort to consolidate and further the progress of African American students.

This Education Partnership Summit will have one principal goal: To develop strategies and techniques to significantly increase the math and reading performance of the San Francisco African American children. A secondary goal is to strengthen parental, community, peer and teacher support for the achievement of African American students to equal the national average within the next two years. Subsidiary or supporting objectives to achieve this goal include:

1. Increasing overall academic achievement;
2. Reducing the placement of African American students in special education classes;
3. Reducing suspensions and expulsions;
4. Reducing dropout rates for African American students;
5. Increasing the graduation rate and college attendance of African American students; and
6. Increased rate in class attendance.

Education Summit Workshops

In addition to the principal address of Superintendent Rojas and a plenary address by Mayor Willie L. Brown, the summit will focus on five major workshops. These focus areas are:

- Improving Reading Achievement;
- Improving Math Achievement;
- Increasing Student Retention, Classroom Participation and Strategies for Success;
- Increasing Parent, Family and Community Involvement and Support;
- Increasing Self-Esteem and Student Achievement.

Nationally recognized experts on each of these subject areas will be leading the workshops. These experts will share and explain strategies that have proved effective in raising the educational performance of African American students. They will also provide assistance to summit participants in developing strategies specifically designed to achieve the goals of the summit.

The African American Community and the SFUSD -- A Brief Overview

In matters of school reform, the San Francisco Unified School District is in the forefront both locally and nationally in promoting research-based educational strategies to improve student achievement. The development and successful implementation of early literacy and math activities, for example, are a direct result of strong community involvement and input. The task of the Summit will be to build upon the successes of educational reform and to develop related strategies that teachers, community leaders, and parents can use to promote academic success in the unique environment of the San Francisco Unified School District. Underlying the commitment to student achievement will be the development of parent ownership, responsibility and accountability as it relates to the education of their children.

The San Francisco Unified School District is the state's fifth largest school district. Like the city itself, the SFUSD is multicultural, multilingual, and one of the most diverse public school systems in the nation. There are more than 60 nationalities represented among the district's students. African American students make up 17.7 percent of a student body of nearly 64,000 students. The remaining student body includes Chinese students, who make up 26.9 percent of the student body, Latinos, 20.9 percent; Whites, 13.1 percent; Filipinos, 7.4 percent; Japanese, 1.0 percent; Koreans, 1.1 percent; American Indians, 0.7 percent; and Samoans, 0.6 percent.

The San Francisco African American community has a long history of participating in the education process, and, when necessary, challenging the policy-makers to do what is required to enhance the

academic performance of African American students in the public schools. In 1962, for example, the local chapter of Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) called on the school board to desegregate the district and thereby establish a more racially balanced composition of schools throughout the district (Kirp, 1982). From 1963 to 1978 the African American community engaged in both protesting and filing lawsuits in an effort to get the school board and the district to meet the needs of San Francisco's African American school children.

Although some progress occurred during this period, improvements were not substantive in the academic achievement of African American students. As a consequence the NAACP filed another lawsuit against the school district in 1978 (San Francisco NAACP v. the SFUSD, 1983). This lawsuit centered on the fact that 1) the Bayview-Hunter's Point Hunters Point schools were still heavily racially segregated, 2) these schools were being denied the resources allocated to other schools in the district, and 3) the students in these schools were continuing to perform poorly academically (Fraga et al., 1997).

Federal District Judge William H. Orrick was assigned this case. It took more than four years of litigation and negotiation before a consent decree was reached in May, 1983.

The Consent Decree

The 1983 Consent Decree is still operative today, and it is a major component in moving the San Francisco School District to take the necessary measures to improve the academic performance of African American students. As Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of Great City Schools, noted in a recent *Los Angeles Times* article, the power of the court is "the glue that other [school districts] don't have" (Woo, August 27, 1997).

The 1983 Consent Decree is a landmark agreement. This is so because the Decree not only requires the desegregation of the schools but it also requires that desegregation be linked to the increased academic achievement of African American students in the San Francisco Unified School District. With this in mind, the court recommended that the parties look beyond desegregation as a panacea to increase academic success among African American children. The parties were challenged to look at the other major factors that impinge upon a child's ability to learn. One challenge found in the Consent Decree is for the City of San Francisco and the SFUSD to develop a strategy to improve **affordable housing** for the urban residents.

Better coordination of public housing is a concern because in San Francisco, 61 percent of students living in public housing are African American. New trends in rebuilding public housing stock ultimately

displace public housing residents, thus having an adverse impact on African American children. The provision of affordable housing could help stem the tide of residents leaving San Francisco because of increasing housing costs. Secondly, to the extent that poor families are overspending for housing costs, they are decreasing the number of dollars available for other family necessities, such as books and school supplies. Also, poverty and poor housing stock have been identified as major impediments to academic performance and success. City and school officials in the State of California must come together to provide, among other things, affordable housing for minorities. This is one among many factors that can help improve the chances of minorities achieving academic success.

Judge Orrick took (and continues to maintain) a strong and progressive stand on the need to see desegregation as only a means to an end. In other words, desegregation was to be implemented as a means to promote and achieve academic excellence for African American and all other children in the school district. It is Judge Orrick's insistence on linking desegregation and higher academic performance that makes the 1983 Consent Decree a historic one that stands apart from nearly all other school desegregation rulings (Fraga et al.).

Also, the Decree assigned various responsibilities for implementing the provisions of the agreement. Included in these provisions was a special educational plan the SFUSD was to use in upgrading the schools in Bay View Hunters Point. Additionally, the court with recommendations from the attorneys for the various parties, appointed a Consent Decree team consisting of nationally known educational experts to assist the court in monitoring the District's progress in implementing the Consent Decree.[1]

Pursuing Educational Reform and Increasing Student Academic Achievement

The desired outcome of educational reform is to improve student academic achievement using effective teaching and learning strategies. The strategy of pursuing academic excellence is firmly rooted in the theories and concepts of effective schooling as developed by Ronald

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[1] The Committee Chairperson is Gary Orfield, Professor of Education, Harvard University. Other Committee members are Professor Robert L. Green, Michigan State University, Professor Laureen Chew, San Francisco State University, Gwen Stephens, California State Department of Education, Professor David Ramerez, California State University at Long Beach, and Hoover Liddell, Consultant to the San Francisco Board of Education.

Edmonds, 1979; Wilbur Brookover and Charles Beady, 1979; and other research scholars.

All children can learn is the guiding principle behind effective schooling theory. Two important findings of effective schooling research has shown that students can achieve academic success regardless of their race or income levels.

Effective teaching and learning strategies demand that the schools help create a total learning environment where:

- Teachers hold high expectations for their students' success;
- Students want teachers who engage them with interesting ways to learn, and who encourage and praise them when they excel academically.
- Teachers show a caring attitude toward students and parents are involved in the teaching-learning process.

Teachers have a major impact on students' educational performance according to the results of a recent survey published in the Cleveland, Ohio, *Plain Dealer* (Sept. 22, 1997). Quality of teaching was rated major by 88 percent of the respondents while the home life of the student was rated major by 83 percent of respondents. Other areas receiving major ratings and percentages include parental involvement in the schools, 79 percent; community involvement in the schools, 67 percent; how discipline is handled, 78 percent; physical condition of buildings, 57 percent; how safe students feel in school, 75 percent; and number of students per teacher, 72 percent. Regardless of the major ratings assigned to each of these factors, each is important in its impact on a student's academic performance. The leadership in the schools must make sure that each of these factors is given appropriate consideration in the management of the school environment.

Additionally, six factors were generally used in grading the teachers. High grades were given by parents for teachers who:

A. Treat the child with respect, *85 percent;*
B. Are available when needed to speak with them, *80 percent;*
C. Challenge the child to learn, *76 percent;*
D. Assign appropriate homework, *76 percent;*
E. Give enough feedback on the child's performance, *73 percent;*
F. Give enough individual attention to the child, *63 percent.*

Effective leadership must also be committed to providing support to teachers and parents in pursuing the goal to maximize student academic achievement. Effective educational leaders must also realize that improved quality of classroom teaching through more well-trained and

educated teachers are indispensable components of educational reform. In the SFUSD, school reform is achieved through Reconstitution. For more information about School Reconstitution, please refer to a speech by Waldemar Rojas, Superintendent of Schools in the San Francisco School District.[1]

African American Teacher Recruitment and School Reform.

It would be helpful to explore incentives to attract the best and brightest teachers to the SFUSD. While we applaud the school system for attracting the best and brightest non-minorities, the challenge lies ahead to attract qualified African American teachers, especially from predominantly black colleges, such as Morehouse and Spelman Colleges, Howard University, Florida A&M University, Tennessee State University, and Hampton University. Young and bright African American teachers at every school level who themselves are sensitive to the needs of African American youth can help sensitize other teachers to their needs.

Research has indicated that a majority of the teachers in the inner cities are non-minorities who either are from or live in a suburban or rural setting. Therefore, in many instances it is difficult for them to relate to the urban environment and its effect upon many of the students. There are currently teacher training models that can be expanded upon by local colleges and universities in which teacher internships become a significant part of the student teacher educational experience. Developing partnerships between successful urban teachers and student interns would ensure that young teachers entering urban classrooms would not find the experience to be a difficult one from an academic and cultural point of view, mounting frustration over the continued academic failure of African American students. Attracting competent teachers to each classroom must be seen as a significant aspect of school reform.

In San Francisco, reform evolved from the city's African American educators, community leaders, and attorneys who encouraged the concept of school reform. Judge Orrick, like San Francisco's African American community, saw the need for radical action to be taken to improve African American student academic performance, and thus he gave court sanction to this new reform strategy (San Francisco NAACP v. SFUSD).

Six schools in the Bayview-Hunter's Point Hunters Point neighborhoods were selected as the first to be involved in a major

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[1] "Research and Experience: the Background to School Reconstitution: A Strategic and Research-based Approach to School Reform." by Waldemar Rojas. A speech given February 18, 1997, at the Carter Center in Atlanta.

educational reform effort known as **Reconstitution.** These schools are Dr. Charles Drew, Sir Francis Drake, and George Washington Carver elementary schools; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Horace Mann middle schools; and Philip Burton High.

It can be stated without reservation that educational reform has been highly successful in improving academic achievement for African American students in those schools. For example, a 1992 committee of experts report required by the Judge Orrick showed that African American students in the reformed schools performed significantly higher on standardized tests (the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills {CTBS}) than African American students in non-reformed schools (Orfield, et al).

Perhaps more significant, African American students in reformed schools achieved higher scores on the CTBS than students in any other schools except magnet/alternative schools and those schools with special-selective admission criteria (Orfield, et al).

Most importantly, African American students at these reformed schools continue to show improved academic performance. Students at George Washington Carver Elementary, for example, had a math score of 53.6 on the 1997 CTBS; more than 3 points above the national average. Both Horace Mann and Martin Luther King Jr. Middle Schools had math and reading scores not far below the national average: 49.7 and 47.5 in math and 48.8 and 48.4 in reading, respectively for the schools. Clearly, these scores are well above the African American student district average scores of 38.0 in math and 39.5 in reading.

In addition to improved academic performance, African American students in reformed schools have benefited in other ways as well. Specifically, African American students in reformed schools have lower dropout rates, lower rates of placement in special education classes, and lower suspension and expulsion rates than do African American students district wide.

These kinds of positive results are generating a growing national interest in the strategy of educational reform. The Cleveland Public Schools, for example, have begun this school year to implement educational reform at two of the elementary schools in its system (The *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, August 22, 1997; Green, 1993). Reform efforts are also in place in Houston, Texas and the Chicago, Illinois public schools.

However, despite the notable achievements of reform in the San Francisco schools, African American parents, teachers, community leaders, and educational leaders are all in agreement that these accomplishments are not enough. Much more must be done to raise the achievement levels of African American students to levels equal to the

national average. As the San Francisco African American community and the School District work to accomplish this goal, it is important to understand that the issue of poor academic performance by African American students is a national problem. One element that contributes significantly to this problem is the high levels of poverty that affect wide sectors of the African American community.

The Effects of Poverty on Educational Achievement

The national poverty rate for African Americans is 33 percent. This is more than two and a half times the 12 percent poverty rate for Whites (Bennett, 1995). Worse, the poverty for African American children is 46 percent. This means that nearly one out of every two African American children live in poverty. These statistics mean that poor African Americans typically live in a density of poverty three to four times higher than that of poor Whites (Jaynes and Williams, 1989).

The effects of this lack of income and resources are multiple and varied, including the impact on the education of poor children. Research has shown that when children are not properly fed, clothed, housed, and feel insecure, they spend less time on task. They either skip school and/or do not complete homework or the other work required to be an academically successful student. Herein lies a challenge for all stakeholders. As the Department of Education states, "The effects of poverty on children's education is well documented. **Low achievement, high dropout rates**, and **poor educational performance** are highly correlated with **poverty**" (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

The U.S. Department of Education lists six factors associated with poor performance in school from The National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, 1997:

1. Parents without a high school diploma.
2. Limited English proficiency.
3. Income less than $15,000.
4. Having a sibling who has dropped out of high school. (Modeling)
5. A child being home alone for more than three hours a day.
6. Children living in single-parent households.

It should be noted that there is a growing body of research literature indicating that single parents can successfully raise their children, many becoming excellent students. The literature also indicates that two parents in a functional partnership will have greater success in producing excellent students (Liontos, 1991).

Many of these risk factors are strongly associated with families in the African American and other communities of poverty. A terrible

consequence of these factors is that as many as one of every two African American children may not be prepared to learn when they enter school (McBay, 1992). The problems of poverty and low educational achievement are often compounded by a lack of high-quality educational opportunities within the schools in poorer neighborhoods. Again, the Department of Education notes that, "Differences in the learning climate or in the distribution of resources between high and low poverty schools have a disproportionate impact on minorities, as racial/ethnic minorities are far more likely to attend high poverty schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997).

Overcoming Poverty

The San Francisco Unified School District believes that with dedication to the principles of effective schools research, the conditions of poverty are not an insurmountable barrier to academic success. For example, SFUSD elementary schools, Malcolm X Academy and Dr. George Washington Carver Academic, located in low income neighborhoods have consistently scored at or above the 50th percentile (NCE). In essence, teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders in San Francisco are well aware of the many obstacles to increasing the academic performance of African American students. It was the determination to overcome these obstacles and conditions of poverty that led to the protracted legal battle that resulted in the Consent Decree. These and other initiatives represent the steadfast determination of San Francisco's African American community to ensure that African American students have the maximum opportunity and appropriate living environments to achieve academic success, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Without such opportunities, as Green (1977) stated long ago, poorly educated African American youth, end up "imprisoned by barriers of race, poverty, low self-esteem, academic failure, and minimal skills." However, the social imprisonment that Green spoke about then has today become in ever alarming numbers the literal imprisonment of African American youth, particularly African American males.

Educational Failure and Imprisonment

The number of African American males in prison continues to swell. There are 471,583 African American males in prison. This number represents 52 percent of the prison population. By contrast there are 438,453 White males in state and federal prisons (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1996).

Nationally, nearly one third (32.2 percent) of young African American males between the ages of 20-29 are under some form of

criminal justice supervision--be it in prison, in jail, on probation, or on parole (Mauer and Huling, 1995).

As bad, however, as these national criminal justice figures are, they are even worse for African American males in California. **Indeed, California has become a major incarceration center for African American males.** A study last year showed that almost 40.0 percent of African American males 20-29 were under some form of criminal justice control in California (*The Plain Dealer*, [Cleveland, Ohio newspaper] February 13, 1996). A significant part of this over representation of African American males is a direct result of the discriminatory practices of prosecutors and other officials involved in the criminal justice process. From 1986 to 1995, for example, not one White offender was convicted of a crack cocaine offense in federal courts in Los Angeles California, even though Whites comprise the majority of crack users (Weikel, 1995).

It is important to note that a rapidly growing number of African American women are also being ensnared in the criminal justice system. There are 30,089 African American women in prison, compared to 27,714 White women. California leads all other states in the number of female prisoners (Mauer and Huling, 1995). These statistics illustrate that California has become a leading state in the incarceration of young African American men and women.

Another fact that must be pointed out is the close connection between low educational achievement and imprisonment rates. A 1990 study of 200 African American youth incarcerated in the Atlanta Youth Development Center found that only 37 percent of these youth had completed 12th grade (Coggins, 1990). Similarly, a Bureau of Justice study found that approximately 50 percent of the inmates in state prisons had less than an 11th grade education. In fact, in many state prisons as much as 70 percent of the inmate population is believed to be illiterate (Bureau of Justice, 1990). Kidder (1990) notes that aside from race, illiteracy may be the strongest common denominator among all prisoners. There can be little doubt that many of the inmates in California prisons are school dropouts. It is equally likely that some of these prisoners are former dropouts from the San Francisco Bay area public school systems.

To reduce the possibility of African American students later becoming ensnared in the criminal justice system, acknowledging the 60 percent not so ensnared, parents, peers, teachers and administrators must continue to unite in a committed effort to promote higher levels of academic success among African American youth. We see all too well what the alternative is. As Green (1992) has stated, "If the African American male is not in high school, he will not be on the college campus, but will surely be unemployed or, much worse, involved in

crime." With varying degrees of intensity this statement is equally true for African American females. On the other hand, the better educated African American youth are the ones with better chances of succeeding in life.

The Economic Rewards of Educational Achievement

It is an irrefutable fact that African Americans with a B.A. or better have much higher income levels than those with only a high school diploma or less. For example, the median income in 1994 for full-time African American employees who were high school graduates was $18,460. The majority of these workers, 55 percent, had earnings below $20,000 a year. By contrast, the median income for African American employees with at least a B.A. was $32,360 a year. In other words, African Americans with a degree earned at least 62 percent more in salary than African Americans without a higher education (Bennett, 1995).

The income disparity in the United States for all ethnic groups is growing wider between the better educated and those with little or inadequate education. This is because the service-oriented, globalized economy of today increasingly requires well-trained, well-educated employees. Unlike twenty or thirty years ago there are few of the high-paying jobs once available to unskilled workers.

The shrinkage of these employment opportunities has affected many sectors of the country, but the impact has been most severe on African Americans, and particularly on African American males. As jobs have disappeared from the inner cities, the earnings of African American men (and women) have steadily decreased. Unemployment rates for young African American men and women are consistently two and a half to three times higher than those for Whites. Discrimination is no doubt part of the reason for such disparity-parity, but the lack of skills and education is also a critical factor in these higher rates of unemployment (Austin et al., 1996; Wilson, 1996). Such evidence strongly indicates that the single most important means for young African American males and females to improve their financial prospects is to obtain a higher education (Green, 1996). It is important for teachers, administrators, and counselors to instill in young African American students the **important link connecting education, income, and prosperity.**

Additionally, the benefits of higher education extend well beyond increased income opportunities. There is much research to show that with improved income levels for African American males, marriage rates increase in the African American community. A study by Sum and Fogg (1989) shows that in 1987 only 3 percent of African American males aged 18-29 with no annual earnings were married, and only a 7 percent

marriage rate for African American males with $5,000 or less in annual earnings. The marriage rate rose to 29 percent for African American males with earnings between $10,000 to $15,000 a year, and 39 percent for males earning $15,000 to $20,000 a year. The rate was over 50 percent for African American males who earned over $20,000 a year. Similar findings between income levels and marriage rates have been found by researchers such as Wilson (1987). Therefore, the likelihood of a child having two parents to support the child-rearing process is enhanced by income.

Educational achievement becomes more important as we consider its impact on both individual income potential and on African American family life. These are two of the important reasons that educational attainment is a subject given great emphasis by the National Task Force on African American Men and Boys. Funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan, the Task Force has over the last several years held meetings and conferences with a broad range of parents, scholars, educators, youth organizations, and community leaders around the country. The various recommendations of these groups and the analyses and research findings of Task Force members were compiled into a book entitled *Repairing the Breach: Key Ways to support Family Life, Reclaim Our Streets, and Rebuild Civil Society in America's Communities* (Austin et al., 1996).

This important work stresses many of the same issues that are central to the Education Summit, such as:

1. The need to raise the educational achievement levels of African American students.
2. The importance of African American students being better trained in subjects such as math, literacy, science and computer science.
3. The vital need for schools to develop strong partnerships with local communities.

Repairing the Breach also emphasizes the fact that higher educational achievement for African American youth is a primary means of overcoming the "growing mismatch between the demands of the marketplace and the skills and educational level of {many} African Americans." Just as importantly, this book sees well-educated youth as being key leaders in helping to promote a civic dialogue among varied community elements, and in helping the African American community to rebuild and restore local institutions, and restore a greater civility and sense of the common good within the African American community (Austin et al., 1996).

Both the work of the National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys and the book *Repairing the Breach* are a consequence of

the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's great interest in and encouragement of leadership development. The Foundation understands the pivotal role that skilled, experienced leadership plays in overcoming the particular problems faced by a group, a community, or a nation.

The history of parents and community representatives working to improve educational outcomes for their children attests to the committed leadership within the San Francisco African American community.

Effective Administrative Leadership

As noted earlier, Effective Schooling research shows that students have a much better chance to succeed when administrative leaders show a strong commitment to promoting academic achievement. Such commitment is reflected by such actions as superintendents and other administrative leaders:

1. Providing students with skilled teachers who hold high expectations for student success.
2. Holding teachers and staff responsible for student achievement.
3. Providing ongoing staff development training.
4. Providing, resources to ensure student success at the highest possible levels.

The SFUSD leadership with the support of the school board, has shown its commitment to educational achievement by implementing these practices as well as others, which include:

1. Reducing class sizes in the first through third grades.
2. Providing unqualified support for accountability systems.
3. Revising teacher training programs to emphasize better classroom instruction in math, literacy, and science.

The success of such programs has allowed the District to increase reading and math scores for the fifth consecutive year. Furthermore, for the second year in a row, districtwide math and reading scores exceeded the national average. No other large urban school district has such a record of consistently high levels of achievement (Woo, 1997).

Although African American (and Latino) students are not performing as well as other groups, it should be kept in mind that African American student scores have generally improved over the last five years. Additionally, to provide a comparative perspective, it should be pointed out that the reading scores of 38.0 and the math score of 39.5 for African American students in the SFUSD place them at the very top levels for the district-wide scores for all students in other urban school

systems. Moreover, the SFUSD district-wide reading and math scores for African American students are well above such scores for the great majority of African American students in other large urban school districts (Woo, 1997; Green, 1993).

Despite, however, the relative improvements in African American students scores, Superintendent Rojas has pledged to bring about even more substantial improvements. The Superintendent has publicly stated that his top priority is to raise the achievement scores of African American (and Latino) students to the national average by the spring of school year 1999. The achievement of this unprecedented goal would without question make African American students in San Francisco the highest performing African American students in the nation.

In working to accomplish this goal, the superintendent will seek the active cooperation and participation of parents, educators, peers and community leaders. He will also continue to work cooperatively with the court-appointed team of experts to fulfill the requirements of the Consent Decree.

Educational and Political Partnership to Increase Student Achievement

A significant meeting occurred on Friday, September 5, 1997, which wedded political and academic strength committed to the academic achievement of African American students. In this meeting, Superintendent Rojas and Mayor Willie L. Brown agreed that the education of African American students in San Francisco is a major priority. Mayor Brown fully agreed with the need and the importance of taking further steps to improve the educational achievement of African American students.

The Mayor expressed his full support for the goals of the Summit, and he offered to provide staff assistance to help ensure that the Summit is a success.

Mayor Brown's many years of successful legislative experience and his national political stature will be of great benefit to the San Francisco Unified School District. In cities such as Chicago and Cleveland, the school systems have been placed under the control of the mayors because the school boards and the school administrations were fragmented, ineffective, and fraught with politics. The San Francisco School administration, however, is seen as creative, clear-sighted, and programmatically effective. As a consequence, Mayor Brown's office and the SFUSD are in partnership to educate the District's children.

Parental Involvement and Student Success

African American parents are also powerful and indispensable allies in the comprehensive effort to increase student achievement. The theme of the Education Partnership Summit is ***ownership, responsibility,* and *accountability.***

Ownership includes, for example, meaningfully participating in events within parental control, such as attending parent-teacher conferences or reading at home with elementary or middle school children. ***Responsibility*** includes such acts as monitoring homework assignments to make sure they are completed and done properly. ***Accountability*** for parents means that they will assume responsibility for home-centered tasks related to the child's educational development, and will evaluate them on how well they have performed those tasks.

One immediate task that African American parents can assume is an essential one of making sure that their children attend school, class, and complete their homework assignments. District records show that in both middle and high schools African American students have the lowest attendance rates of any racial or ethnic group. Chinese students' attendance is more than twice that of African American students, 76.4 percent to 32.0 percent. And the groups with lowest attendance rates, African American, Latinos, and American Indians, all have the lowest grade-point averages. On the other hand, the groups with highest attendance rates, Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans, all have the highest grade-point averages.

These statistics suggest that one of the remedies for lower achievement is greater class attendance and participation. Parents can play a major role in achieving this objective.

Although the focus in this section has been on parents, the concepts of ***ownership, responsibility,*** and ***accountability*** apply as well to all other sectors of the African American community in the San Francisco School District. This includes educators, community representatives, political and business leaders.

Broadly speaking, ***parental*** ownership, responsibility, and accountability indicate that the San Francisco African American community will be as demanding of itself as it is of teachers and school administrators. These concepts mean that the African American community will provide the same commitment to raising educational achievement as the community asks educators to provide. This could mean, for example, African American men and women being mentors to African American students, or it could mean business leaders setting up internships or work study programs for African American youth. In total, these partnerships between the stakeholders will measurably increase the academic achievement of African American students.

With regard to the Education Partnership Summit itself, *ownership*, *responsibility*, and *accountability* mean that participants will come to the Summit with a commitment to engage in serious discussion, to develop effective strategies and techniques and to follow through on the implementation of these strategies and techniques.

The African American Religious Community has been instrumental in supporting the quality of life of the African American community. During these times of educational crises, the church and other religious institutions, once again, can be instrumental in making a positive contribution to the academic achievement of African American children. Some models of involvement include churches, mosques, and temples making their underutilized facilities available for daycare and educational enrichment experiences for the children and the community. Through other community outreach efforts the religious organizations can help to provide educational experiences that involve the parents and their children (Green, 1982).

Ministers, pastors and the religious leadership are being sought as full partners in this effort to increase educational opportunities and greater educational achievement for San Francisco's African American students. The Young African American Achievers Program model involving Jones United Methodist Church , Providence Baptist Church, San Francisco Christian Center, Bethel AME Church in concert with Ella Hill Hutch Community Center is a prototype of this type of effective, collaborative effort.

Conclusion

For the past fourteen years, the San Francisco African American community has been consistent in its goals to improve the achievement of African American students. The support of the local branch of the NAACP, local religious institutions, many citizens of good will, Mayor Willie Brown, the court and finally, the committed leadership of its current school superintendent Dr. Waldemar Rojas and the school board, is an indispensable partnership to achieve the goals of the Summit. Now the African American community and Superintendent Rojas have set before themselves a major challenge: To raise the math and reading scores of African American students to the national average within the next two years. This great challenge also represents a great opportunity. It provides the goals and the purpose for the various segments of the community--parents, educators, community leaders, and school administrators--to unite in a common effort to ensure that African American children succeed academically. For it is well understood that if African Americans succeed academically, they will have a far greater chance of succeeding in life.

African American Youth Achievers in the SFUSD

The following students are high achievers and are model student representatives in the San Francisco Unified School District. They have been selected because they have distinguished themselves in the following areas:

1. Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)
2. Academic Achievement (Honors)
3. Student/Extracurricular Activities
4. Community Service/Leadership

Gary Anderson: grade 8, Gloria R. Davis Academic Middle School, Honor Roll, awards in math and science, football, track, art, Student Council, Class President, Bayview Foundation Cleanup Program.

Joshua Bloom: grade 10, Thurgood Marshall Academic High School, Honor Roll, baseball, karate, Principal's Cabinet, fund-raising support for Los Altos Charlie Rose Baseball League.

Danielle Bracy: grade 8, Gloria R. Davis Academic Middle School, Honor Roll, awards in math and language arts, softball, choir, cheerleader, talent show, 7th grade vice president, conflict manager, Sabbath Day Class teacher.

Dewayne Bradford: grade 12, Washington High School, Honor Roll, Salvation Army, Workability I (University of California-SF).

Monica Bussey: Thurgood Marshall Academic High School, Academic Scholarship Award, Honors Student, Spirit Squad cheerleader, Teen Leader, Sorority Zinos-Teen Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, Sunday School teacher.

Ceirin Connolly-Ingram: grade 8, Gloria R. Davis Academic Middle School, Honor Roll, awards in math and science, baseball, Columbia Boys and Girls Club, Student Council vice president, conflict manager, peer tutor.

Maurice Crayton: grade 12, Burton Academic High School, Honor Roll, Principal's Award, basketball, Holiday Gift and Basket Drive for Churches and Group Homes.

Jonathan Gerald Dyson: grade 12, Washington High School, Honor Roll, football, teacher's aide, active in First AME Zion Church.

Brandy Fontenot: grade 12, J. Eugene McAteer High School, Honor Roll, Bay Area Urban League Recipient, Student Council, San Francisco Youth Commission, African American Retention Program, Senior Class Vice President, Black Student Union conflict manager.

Natrina Johnson: grade 8, Martin Luther King, Jr. Academic Middle School, 2nd place San Francisco Essay Winner, African American Honor Roll, Cooperative Developmental Energy Program, MESA, Summerbridge, Senior Center volunteer.

Deoaunta Lyons: grade 11, Eugene McAteer High School, Honor Roll, football, Neighborhood Gardening, Inner City Youth program.

Talia McClure: grade 12, J. Eugene McAteer High School, Young African American Achievers Luncheon, AP Student, Environmental Club, Students for Positive Action at McAteer, varsity cheerleader, Student Body and Senior Class President, Black Student Union secretary, Prevention Leadership Alternatives for Youth community advocate.

Ikheem Rhodes: grade 7, Martin Luther King Jr. Academic Middle School, Honor Roll March for African American Students, baseball, basketball, soccer, Class President and representative.

Edward Rivera: grade 12, Mission High School, Honor Roll for African American Achievers Award, African American Retention Program president, Black Student Union Vice President, African American Leadership Conference Award, peer counseling, elementary school tutor, basketball, chorus.

Tairinda Rushing: grade 12, Burton Academic High School, Who's Who in American High School Students, National Macy's Scholar, Presidential Academic Fitness Award, NASA Research Center intern, UCSF intern, Christmas Travel exchange student, Class President, National Black Child Development Institute representative, Red Cross volunteer, Recycling Program (Girl Scouts).

Demetra Ryan: grade 12, Lowell High School, Honor Roll, Student Government, Black Student Union, Lowell Advanced Choir, Lowell Executive Council treasurer, Thanksgiving Food Drive/Homeless Feeding and Glide Memorial Food Drive volunteer.

Jamil Sheared: grade 12, Lowell High School, Honor Roll, Symphonic Band, Black Student Union, JROTC Drum and Bugle Corps Commander, Freedom Foundation Youth Leadership, Third Baptist Church tutor.

Marcus A. Thompson: grade 12, Raoul Wallenberg Traditional High School, Honor Roll, AP Student, baseball, basketball, band, track & field, Black Student Union, YMCA volunteer.

Kewanda Williams: grade 12, Lowell High School, Shield Honor Society, California Scholarship Federation, Kermesse Multicultural Fair, Medical Explorers Club, Laguna Honda Hospital volunteer, DeYoung Museum ambassador.

Tikia Tramale Yelverton: grade 11, Raoul Wallenberg Traditional High School, Honor Roll, AP student, basketball, track and field, cross country, Black Student Union president, Treasure Bible Club, YMCA volunteer, church youth choir.

Successful Program Efforts
to Support the Academic Achievement
Of African American Students
in the San Francisco Unified School District

Incentive Awards Program

In 1991 a unique partnership was established between UC Berkeley (UCB) and SFUSD called the *Incentive Awards Program*. This program is designed to motivate high achieving, economically disadvantaged high school students and provides resources and support that enables them to achieve their highest goals.

Each year an outstanding student is selected from each of the district's thirteen UC-eligible high schools. The incentive is a $24,000 scholarship award and other financial aid. Each student is enrolled at UCB with an individually tailored support program on campus.

The Incentive Awards Scholars are young people who have overcome financial hardship, language barriers, dysfunctional families, and violent neighborhoods. They are each heroes.

Currently, the African American population in the SFUSD comprises 16 percent of the students. Of the SFUSD graduates attending UCB in the last four years 3 percent are African American. However, 16 percent of the 54 Incentive Award Students at UCB are African American and all are on a path to graduation.

University of California (Berkeley)
The Academic Talented Development Program (ATDP)

This is a summer program that began in 1986 with eleven academically talented minority students. For the last three years the program has enrolled 120, 150, and 160 students, respectively. The students are selected from grade seven through high school at eighteen SFUSD schools. This year the program is year round with ongoing support for students. The students take rigorous courses in writing and literature, foreign language, computer science, advanced mathematics, social sciences, and biological and physical science at the UCB campus. The program is approximately 85 percent African American and Latino students and their academic achievement is impressive.

The I.R.I.S.E. Initiative

Infusing Responsibilities for Intellectual and Scholastic Excellence (I.R.I.S.E.), a language and math literacy intervention program, was designed to improve the performance of San Francisco's 2nd-8th grade African American students in the lowest quartile. It was also designed to

increase professional development for teachers and administrators and demonstrate community support for public education.

The project serves 74 classrooms in thirteen San Francisco schools. It begins with a selected set of classrooms and progresses toward a school-wide model. In cooperation with San Francisco State University's Center for Applied Cultural Studies and Educational Achievement, each school completes the requisite training for teachers and administrators. Each school implements a curriculum of cultural awareness, language acquisition and mathematics proficiency. By combining close teacher/student relationships, relevant and rigorous curriculums, and stimulating learning environments, high student achievement is being pursued.

The African American Retention Program for High School Students

This program is a cooperative venture between the City College of San Francisco, SFUSD and the San Francisco corporate sector. It was created to increase high school retention and graduation rates. The goals of the program include increased academic skills in mathematics and English, and improved study habits. Self-esteem workshops help students realize the importance of remaining in and graduating from high school. The program also provides classes, workshops and employment information, resume writing, job search and job interviewing skills. Additionally, it provides guidance and information regarding transfer opportunities, admission and application information for four-year colleges, including historically black colleges and universities. The program curriculum is designed to emphasize excellence, acceleration and success. Fundamental to the AARP curriculum structure is the premise that students gain an understanding of the concerns that affect young people today.

AARP enrolls between 27–36 students each semester. The program has helped high school students increase their grade point average range from 1.6 to 2.5–2.8. Several students have a grade point average of 3.8 and higher. AARP students are motivated to remain and graduate from their high schools. After graduation, 85 percent of AARP students enroll in institutions of higher education. AARP students' high school verbal reading and writing skills are improved to college level entrance standards and students are prepared to take the high school proficiency tests, SAT, and ACT. Student attitudes regarding higher education are tremendously enhanced by this program.

YouthWorks Project

In an attempt to address the needs of many high school graduates who desire to go on to college, but cannot because of cost or the need to support their family, SFUSD created two distinct programs that directly benefit African American youth. YouthWorks is designed to create a partnership between the District, the employment sector, post secondary education and the communities of San Francisco. Started in 1996 as one of the "school-to-career" programs, YouthWorks is sponsored by the Office of the Mayor and is designed to provide youth with paid internships in San Francisco city government. SFUSD has joined in partnership with the Mayor's Advisory Committee on YouthWorks to further offer students the opportunity to earn high school credits toward graduation while learning how local government functions.

A special school-to-career initiative assisted United Airlines, United Parcel Service, and American Protective Services in establishing 325 full and part-time positions for high school graduates; including entry level union jobs with health benefits and pension provisions.

African American Family Resource Center

The SFUSD African American Family Resource Center will provide an array of programs and activities for families and caregivers in order to foster improved parental involvement in their children's education. Families will be assisted with acquiring the knowledge and skill needed to provide the highest level of nurturing to their children in order to increase student success in school.

The guiding principle of the Resource Center is family empowerment, that is, enabling families to build on their own strengths and capabilities to promote the healthy development of children and giving families access to information and other resources enabling them to serve as advocates for their own families.

The Resource Center, located at 1550 Evans Street (at Third) on the first floor, will house an educational resource library, multi-media center, conference room, student center, computer lab and staff offices. In its first year, the Center will provide a workshop series featuring topics such as family literacy, building relationships, and strengthening school staff. Through raising self esteem and academic expectations, students will be prepared for college.

The Young African American Achievers Program

The Young African American Achievers Program model involving Jones United Methodist Church, Providence Baptist Church, San Francisco Christian Center, Bethel AME Church in concert with Ella Hill Hutch Community Center is a prototype of collaborative effort and

typifies the role that can be played by the African American religious community. YAAAP has been instrumental in supporting the quality of life of the African American community.

Involvement includes churches, mosques, and temples making their underutilized facilities available for daycare and educational enrichment experiences for the children and the community. Through other community outreach efforts the religious organizations can help to provide educational experiences that involve the parents and their children. Ministers, pastors and the religious leadership are being sought as full partners in this effort.

Appendix D

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